

Helping to explain new provisions benefiting small businesses in the health insurance reform bill, Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) recently met with small business owners and officials at the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce's Coal City office to discuss how new health insurance reforms will benefit them.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and they are on the front lines of bringing jobs back to our families. Right now, they're being challenged greatly by rising health care costs," said Halvorson. "The health insurance bill that I voted for provides tax credits for small business owners to cover their employees; this means almost 15,000 small businesses in our district alone could see tax relief to help them provide health care for their workers. It allows small businesses to band together to purchase insurance, a bipartisan idea that will benefit over 16,000 small businesses across our district. I'm committed to helping our small businesses grow and succeed, as this bill is implemented, every small business will see more opportunities to expand our economy and create the jobs our working families need."

Over the past ten years nationwide, health care premiums for small business have risen by almost 130 percent, leaving only about 45 percent of small businesses able to offer health insurance. These rising costs have meant that 60 percent of the total number of uninsured are small business owners, employees, and their families.

"Our small businesses have questions about how this new health insurance reform law will impact them, and we're glad that Congresswoman Halvorson was able to provide information," said Caroline Portlock, Executive Director of the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce. "We look forward to continuing our work with Congresswoman Halvorson to help our small businesses create jobs and bring our economy back."

As a member of the House Committee on Small Business, Halvorson has worked to increase opportunities for small business owners to access needed capital so that they can grow their businesses and create jobs. Halvorson also fought for many common-sense, pro-small business provisions in the new health insurance reform law, like allowing for small businesses to pool resources and purchase insurance across state lines.